DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 226 737 IR 050 104

TITLE	Rhode Island Dissemination Capacity Building Project. Final Report (1976-1981).
INSTITUTION	Rhode Island State Dept. of Education, Providence. Bureau of Technical Assistance.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Dec 81
CONTRACT	NIE-G-76-0055
NOTE	84p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Charts; *Educational Resources; Elementary Secondary Education; Federal Aid; *Information Dissemination; Information Services; Justice; Program Descriptions; School Districts; Shared Services; *State Departments of Education; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS	Educational Information; *Rhode Island; *State Capacity Building Program

ABSTRACT

This report describes the major accomplishments of the Rhode Island Dissemination Capacity Building Project (DCBP) in improving the dissemination of educational information by means of information collection, linkage, and management services. Five sections comprise: (1) a report of the activities of the Rhode Island DCBP from 1976 to 1981; (2) an analysis of the status of educational information dissemination prior to the project and at its completion; (3) an evaluation of the project's approach to improving educational equity for minorities, women, and the handicapped; (4) a discussion of methods of evaluation employed throughout the project; and (5) a delineation of the attempted institutionalization of DCBP services, i.e., the transfer of funding from federal to other sources. DCBP accomplishments as reported include the development or expansion of files containing educational information, the compilation of resource guides and information products, the design of targeted communications, the coordination of conferences, the provision of training in the effective use of information, and other services to the local education authorities (LEAs) and the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). Appendices include sample program and evaluation design charts and a detailed examination of the failure of Rhode Island's attempt to institutionalize DCBP services. (ESR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED226737

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

RHODE ISLAND DISSEMINATION CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT. FINAL REPORT (1976-1981)

Rhode Island Department of Education
Bureau of Technical Assistance
Support Services Unit

NIE-G-76-0055

December 1981

IR050104

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION..... i

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES..... 1

Background..... 1

Information Needs..... 1

Linkage Needs..... 2

Management Needs..... 2

Description of Project Components..... 3

Project Activities..... 3

Information Services..... 3

Linkage Services..... 4

Management Services..... 5

PRE/POST PROJECT DESCRIPTION..... 6

Information Services..... 6

Linkage Services..... 7

Management Services..... 9

Related Accomplishments.....10

APPROACH TO EQUITY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS.....11

Background.....11

Approach.....11

Information Needs.....11

Linkage Needs.....12

Management Needs.....13

EVALUATION OF SERVICES.....15

Background.....15

Approach.....16

Findings: Information Services.....16

July, 1977 Report.....17

June, 1978 Report.....18

May, 1979 Report.....18

June, 1979 Report.....19

August, 1979 Report.....21

June, 1980 Report.....24

Findings: Coordination and Linkage Services.....26

June, 1977 Report.....27

March, 1978 Report.....29

July, 1978 Report.....30

June, 1979 Report.....30

August, 1979 Report.....31

June, 1980 Report.....33

Summary.....35

INSTITUTIONALIZATION.....37

Background.....37

Overview of Approach.....37

Results.....38

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Program and Evaluation Designs

Appendix B: "Examination of Rhode Island's Approach to Institutionalizing Dissemination Services Funded Through the Dissemination Capacity Building Project." (December, 1981)

INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Dissemination Capacity Building Project (DCBP) (NIE-G-76-0055) has operated from 1976 to 1981 with varying levels of federal financial support. This report describes the major accomplishments of the project during that time span and addresses issues of special interest, such as equity, impact and institutionalization.

Part I of the report describes the activities and accomplishments of the Rhode Island DCBP and Part II presents a pre-post analysis of the status of dissemination prior to the grant award (1976) and at its completion (1981). Part III focuses on the project's approach to equity. Part IV addresses project evaluation, including highlights of client feedback on effectiveness of services, impact and major findings. The last section of the report, Part V, summarizes Rhode Island's approach toward institutionalization of DCBP services supported by the grant and the results of that effort. Appendix B contains a complete description of Rhode Island's approach to institutionalization and an analysis of strengths and problems associated with that approach.

As the report indicates, capacity building has taken place within the Rhode Island Department of Education and objectives of the project during the federal funding period have been accomplished. Further client reaction to and support of services received have been highly positive. However, a major goal -- institutionalization of all dissemination services previously supported by DCBP funds -- has not been achieved; only a limited number of selected components of the services have been continued and are now being provided by other Support Services staff.

I. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Background

Rhode Island's Dissemination Capacity Building Project (DCBP) has operated during the years 1976 to 1981, and was designed to strengthen the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE) existing dissemination system. That system was directed toward four goals of the State Education Agency (SEA):

1. to increase the availability of knowledge to educators;
2. to increase the capacity of educators to seek and use knowledge;
3. to improve decisionmaking by educators; and
4. to improve programs and practices in schools.

The DCBP focused on addressing information, linkage and management needs to achieve a more effective and coordinated dissemination system. In 1976, RIDE had in place an information center, a group of consultants whose role was to serve as full-time linkers to Rhode Island's forty school districts, and a unit whose responsibility was to provide training to educators and administrators. All of these services were located in one Bureau (Technical Assistance) within RIDE. An extensive evaluation of Bureau of Technical Assistance (BTA) services showed that several needs existed in the area of information needs, linkage, etc. These have been addressed by DCBP project activities, and are as follows:

Information Needs

- providing information and services for local education agencies (LEAs) engaged in the Local Planning and Assessment Process (LPAP);[1]

[1] The major purpose of LPAP is to help LEAs to plan and assess educational programs in local priority need areas.

- providing information in the areas of Special Education and Vocational Education;[2]
- increasing descriptions of programs, products and practices with particular emphasis on Rhode Island and regional materials;
- integrating management and program information; and
- integrating public information with other forms of information as appropriate.

Linkage Needs

- establishing a coordinated program for producing targeted communications (brochures, newsletters, etc.);
- developing the capacity to design such communications;
- developing and running conferences and workshops to share educational information; and
- providing training in the use of information.

Management Needs

- developing a mechanism for coordinating dissemination activities;
- increasing the centralization of RIDE information and resources; and
- ensuring that RIDE communications are adequate to serve the needs of educators.

In addition to the improvements in information and linkage services outlined above, the need to extend services to Federal programs and to link with other key RIDE programs which impacted heavily on LEAs was recognized. In conclusion, it was felt that, building upon the key elements of a dissemination program already in place, DCBP project activities would result in a comprehensive and more coordinated agency-wide dissemination system.

---

[2]New Special Education regulations and major new Vocational Education programs were developed at this time and required the development of additional and more extensive information services.

Description of Project Components

DCBP project activities were designed to improve services already in place and to add services and components where necessary.

- Information Services

  A new staff person was assigned to work with the existing consultant in the Information Center. Objectives and activities to expand the quantity and improve the quality of information services in the need areas outlined above were developed and implemented.

- Linkage Services

  Two new staff persons were assigned to develop targeted communications and to develop and run conferences and workshops. Objectives and activities to accomplish these goals and to strengthen the linkage network both within and outside of RIDE were developed and implemented.

- Management Services

  A coordinator was assigned to address the management needs outlined above. Objectives and activities to enhance the agency-wide coordination of dissemination were developed and implemented.

Project Activities

Major DCBP project activities during the years 1976 to 1981 were undertaken to address information, linkage and management needs and are as follows.

Information Services

1. Special files on validated and promising programs and practices with particular emphasis on Rhode Island and the northeast region were established. A Program File Glossary (see Appendix of 1978-79 Continuation Proposal) was developed.

2. Special Education and Vocational Education fugitive document files were expanded.

3. An information base and process for providing in-depth information responses for LEAs engaged in LPAP were developed.

4. The integration of management and program information occurred as appropriate.

5. The provision of information to the public was coordinated with other dissemination activities as appropriate.

6. A needs assessment resource file was established specifically for LPAP clients and integrated with the regular needs assessment file.

7. Resource guides were developed including guides designed specifically to meet the needs of women and other minority groups. The topics included Bilingual Education, Women and Career Education, Women and Higher Education, Women's Issues, Environmental Education, Energy Education, Gifted and Talented Education, Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Needs Assessment, Metric Education, and Consumer Education. Also, a Teacher Evaluation Bibliography and a Program Evaluation Guide were developed.

8. Information products on LPAP were developed. These include several slide-tape presentations, flyers, brochures, a Guidelines Manual, and a Planning and Reporting Guide.

9. Procedures for updating and expanding original and added resources and information were developed and implemented.

Linkage Services

1. A program for developing targeted communications was established. DCBP staff provided technical assistance in the development of targeted communications to RIDE units/bureaus/programs and to LEAs on a limited basis.

2. DCBP staff designed and developed targeted communications including booklets, brochures, newsletters, flyers, posters, guides, manuals, reports, slide-tape presentations, transparencies, posters, and charts. Services have been provided on an increasing basis to Federal programs and to other key RIDE programs which impact heavily on LEAs (e.g., LPAP, National Diffusion Network, Nutrition Education Program, Special Education Inservice Training Program, Title IV Office).

3. DCBP staff provided assistance in planning and running conferences and workshops for information sharing. Services were provided to RIDE units/bureaus/programs, to LEAs on a limited basis, and, on an increasing basis, to Federal programs and to other key RIDE programs which impact heavily on LEAs.

4. Conference planning checklists, files containing information on public and commercial conference sites, and files on model conference products were established and were updated on a regular basis.

5. A Master Calendar for the scheduling of conferences and workshops was established and maintained.

6. A conference schedule, "The Conference Alert" was instituted from the Master Calendar entries.

7. Training was offered on an ongoing basis. Topics for training included information use, graphics, conference planning, use of audio-visual equipment and development of presentations.

8. Procedures for establishing and maintaining internal communications networks were established. Information Alerts were developed and used by the Information Center to notify RIDE staff of appropriate information and resources available. Two-way communications allowed RIDE staff to update the Information Center on newly acquired resources or appropriate programmatic developments. DCBP staff sat on advisory groups and joint staff meetings (e.g., for LPAP and Gifted/Talented Education) as appropriate to promote the exchange of information and the sensing of information needs.

9. A network of communications with over fifty Rhode Island professional organizations was established and maintained.

10. DCBP maintained and coordinated the Department-wide use of audio-visual equipment.

11. Procedures for strengthening communications and linkages between RIDE and its constituents were established and maintained.

Management Services

1. An advisory group was established to guide early DCBP project activities to promote the coordination of dissemination activities.

2. Training in running conference, developing targeted communications and using information provided to enhance the capacity of RIDE staff.

3. Models and procedures for designing effective targeted communications and running effective conferences and workshops were developed.

4. Processes for coordination of RIDE information and resources were established.

5. All project activities were, on an increasing basis, targeted to support Federal programs, programs which impact heavily on LEAs, and programs which foster the promotion of improved programs and practices in the LEAs.

6. DCBP staff provided technical assistance in developing effective dissemination plans for RIDE programs/units/bureaus and in developing appropriate communications and dissemination methods for specific target audiences.

II. PRE/POST PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The following compares RIDE dissemination activities and resources prior to the DCBP project (FY'76) and at the completion of the project (FY'81). The comparison is organized by the three areas of need (informational, linkage and management) outlined in Section I which were addressed by DCBP objectives.

Information Services

Prior to FY 1976	After FY 1981
Computerized on-line retrieval and search capability (DIALOG).	Computerized on-line retrieval and search capability (DIALOG).
Maintained collection of educational journals.	Expanded educational journal collection.
Very limited program files.	Greatly expanded program files with emphasis on validated and promising programs and practices from Rhode Island and the Northeast.
Special and Vocational Education fugitive document files.	Greatly expanded Special and Vocational Education fugitive document files.
Limited capacity to meet information neeeds of LEAs engaged in LPAP.	Fully developed capacity to provide in-depth information responses to LEAs engaged in LPAP.
Limited integration of management and program information in response to requests for information.	Full integration of management and program information in response to requests for information (e.g., MIS).
Limited integration of public information with appropriate dissemination activities.	Integration of public information with dissemination activities as appropriate.
Limited coordination of information bases and resources agencywide.	Expanded coordination of RIDE information and resources (e.g., Vocational Education, School Improvement file, etc.).

No needs assessment resource file.	Needs assessment resource file established.
No Program File Glossary.	Program File Glossary developed.
Maintained minimum collection of reports produced by RIDE personnel.	Adopted pro-active approach to collecting RIDE-produced reports for dissemination to general public.
Development of resource guides and other information products on limited basis.	Resource guides and other information products developed on a regular basis and targeted to the needs of women and other minorities (e.g., Bilingual Education Guide, Women's Issues Guide, etc.).
Training in the effective use of information conducted on an an informal basis.	Training in the effective use of information conducted on a formal, ongoing basis for RIDE staff and expanded on a regular basis to R.I. educators (e.g., workshop presented at annual Teachers' Convention).
Limited development of information products for LPAP.	LPAP information products (e.g., brochures, slide-tape presentations, guides and manuals) developed on a regular basis.
No conference resources and information.	Extensive files containing model conference products, conference planning checklists and current information on public and commercial conference sites.

Linkage Services

Prior to FY 1976	After FY 1981
No program for development of targeted communications.	Fully developed and established program for the development of targeted communications.
No capacity for the design/ production of targeted communications.	Fully developed capacity to design/ produce targeted communications including brochures, booklets, slide-tape presentations, flyers, posters, charts and transparencies.

Informal procedures for two-way communication both within and outside of RIDE for information sharing and needs sensing.	Formalized procedures for two-way communications (e.g., LPAP, Information Alerts, etc.).
Limited emphasis of dissemination activities on Federal programs, programs which impact heavily on LEAs, and programs which promote validated and promising programs and practices in the LEA (e.g., NDN).	Increased and ongoing emphasis of dissemination activities on validated and promising programs and practices in the LEA (e.g., NDN).
Training in use of information	Expanded and formalized training on use of information; provided training in graphic design, planning and running conferences, developing presentations and use of audio-visual equipment.
Limited capacity for planning and running conferences and workshops.	Fully developed capacity for developing and running conferences and workshops including site arrangements, developing conference products (e.g., agendas) and internal budget support procedures.
No conference resources and information.	Extensive resource files containing model conference products, conference planning checklists and current information on public and commercial conference sites.
No Master Calendar.	A Master Calendar for scheduling of conferences and workshops established and maintained.
No Conference Alert.	A listing of entries on the Master Calendar (entitled the Conference Alert) published on a monthly basis; Conference Alert distributed to RIDE staff, professional organizations, state agencies, and interested publics.
No audio-visual equipment capacity.	Audio-visual equipment obtained, maintained and made available to RIDE staff on an ongoing basis.
No communications network with professional organizations.	Communications network with Rhode Island professional organizations established and maintained.

No direct provision of services to LEAs in the areas of conference assistance and developing targeted communications.	Direct provision of services in these areas to LEAs on a limited basis.
No awareness activities for DCBP project activities.	Development of and increased emphasis on awareness activities for DCBP project activities.
No assistance in the areas of assessing linkages of RIDE programs and their constituents.	Provision of assistance in assessing and monitoring linkages of RIDE programs to their constituents (e.g., assistance in developing program designs, evaluation designs and other evaluation products).

Management Services

Prior to FY 1976	After FY 1981
No dissemination advisory group.	A dissemination advisory group was established to guide early DCBP project activities designed to promote the coordination of dissemination activities.
Limited RIDE staff capacity to plan and implement dissemination activities.	Enhanced through training and technical assistance the capacity of RIDE staff to plan and implement dissemination activities (e.g., design and plan dissemination strategies, select and develop dissemination products).
No standards or procedures for the production of targeted communications or for planning and running conferences and workshops.	Model products and procedures for designing effective targeted communications and to plan and run conferences and workshops.
Limited coordination of information and resources agencywide.	Increased coordination of information and resources agencywide and establishment of procedures to maintain and enhance this coordination.
Limited coordination of dissemination activities agencywide.	Increased coordination of dissemination activities agencywide.

Related Accomplishments

In addition to the accomplishments outlined above, there was an increase in the dimension, scope and sophistication of services provided over the span of the project. This occurred primarily in the areas of targeted communications and conference assistance. Both the assistance provided and the products developed in these areas reflected the expanded knowledge of DCBP project staff in the various RIDE program areas and an increased ability to design and develop effective and sophisticated products. DCBP project staff also enhanced their effectiveness as interpersonal linkers within RIDE during the course of the project. An increase in the usefulness and timelines of the assistance and services provided was reflected in a corresponding and continued increase in both clients and the number of services provided. Ongoing DCBP services such as the Conference Alert and the providing of audio-visual equipment to clients also enjoyed greater use and popularity. Procedures to provide these services were revised and streamlined on a regular basis.

Finally, it should be noted that DCBP priorities remained sensitive to and were adjusted to meet shifting RIDE and local priorities. Some priorities (e.g., LPAP) remained constant, others (e.g., the Program for Excellence) were deleted, and new priorities (e.g., women and minorities) were added. In this way, the DCBP project provided services that were flexible in response to client and program needs.

III. APPROACH TO EQUITY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Background

The approach to equity in Rhode Island, as noted in the original proposal for the Dissemination Capacity Building Project (p. 16), is interpreted to mean that all students in the state have access to those educational resources which optimize their learning. Educational resources were defined as personnel, facilities, money and the knowledge with which to improve the educational delivery system.

Pertaining directly to dissemination, the approach to equity was described as equality of access to information and to technical services to facilitate utilization of that knowledge. The DCBP, it was determined, would contribute to equality of educational opportunity "by providing linkages among all school districts, by providing information to all educators who request it and by planning coordinated delivery systems for public management and program information to all educators" (page 16 of original proposal).

Approach

In each of the three areas of program operation -- information services, linkage and management -- equity was addressed in a variety of ways. These will be described in the sections which follow.

Information Needs

Two primary strategies were adopted in carrying out information services that would promote the goal of equity. First, information services were made readily available and accessible to all education populations in Rhode Island. Numerous information searches were conducted for various groups and

individuals across the state which focused on equity issues. Examples of such searches include: "Barriers to the Handicapped," "Minimum Employment Opportunities Among Youth and Minority Groups," "Female Leadership Roles in Education and Related Fields," and "Adapted Physical Education for the Mentally Retarded."

The second information services approach to equity involved the development of resource guides on relevant topics, such as: "Bilingual Education," "Women's Issues," "Women and Career Education," and "Gifted and Talented Education." Target audiences for these resource guides, in addition to special groups identified for each topic, included local decisionmakers such as curriculum directors principals and school superintendents.

Linkage Needs

Linkage between the state agency and its client groups, primarily local school district staffs, was carried out through field consultants of two types: program development consultants working as generalists to link various services and resources to local educators, and program specialists, working part of the time in the field in areas such vocational education, civil rights, and federal Title programs. To complement and strengthen these linkage services, Rhode Island's DCBP linkage component was designed to focus on strengthening communications between the Department and local school districts and among school districts by providing linkage primarily through field staff (Program Development Unit) and by providing technical services (DCBP staff) to Department staff in the development of targeted communications, conferencing and related services.

Three programs whose primary mission is equity were frequent users of the linkage services provided by the DCBP. The Civil Rights Office tapped services most often in the design of targeted communications, specifically with respect to methods and content for conveying program resources and services to meet the needs of groups who were disadvantaged for reasons of race, sex or handicap. Publications in several languages were prepared at various times during the five years of the project, and were directed toward both educational and lay groups.

Similar services were provided for the Vocational Education Sex Equity Program and the Title I Program. Assistance in the design and implementation of parent training workshops and assistance in conferencing were services, in addition to targeted communications, that were provided to these programs and which addressed equity through linkage services.

Management Needs

Efforts to address equity through the management component of Rhode Island's DCBP were varied as the project moved from its earlier to later stages. The Dissemination Advisory Group (DAG) was the primary coordination vehicle for dissemination during the start-up and early years of the grant. The DAG included representatives from all Department bureaus, including representatives from programs with equity as a primary emphasis such as Equal Educational Opportunities (now the Civil Rights Office) and Special Education.

As dissemination services became a more regular, integrated dimension of Department activities the DAG was phased out. In its place, DCBP staff members became involved on a permanent basis in program committees within given programs to help in defining more sharply the dissemination needs to

be addressed and strategies to be employed. Examples of ongoing committee representation and participation by DCBP staff were the Joint Committee for the Local Planning and Assessment Process, the steering committee to guide the development and implementation of programs for gifted/talented students, and development of audio-visual and written communications materials and training to aid Title I parents in conducting peer training in Title I evaluation models.

Ad hoc participation occurred when appropriate to help design and coordinate dissemination activities for various programs. These services were provided to the Bureau of Vocational Education and, in particular, its Sex Equity Program and to the Civil Rights Office in reviewing and formatting bilingual education curriculum materials. Numerous examples of these types of participation in planning and design activities of programs targeted toward equity were in evidence during the latter years of the DCBP.

IV. EVALUATION OF SERVICES

Background

The Bureau of Technical Assistance, where DCBP services were housed, uses a Discrepancy Evaluation Model (DEM) to assess the quality and impact of its services. The DEM defines evaluation as the comparison of performance against a standard; with the difference between the two termed a discrepancy. Discrepancy information then provides a basis for determining if either the standard or performance should be changed. The model is based on the premise that evaluation is most easily and effectively implemented if those involved agree on a common set of assumptions and procedures before starting.[3]

To implement the DEM, a program design and an evaluation design are planned. The program design, in graphic display and narrative, describes inputs, processes and outputs by telling "Who? What? When? How? With what resources?". The evaluation design requires identification of decision situations (critical points or stages of a program that should be examined) and, based on those, development of an evaluation workplan defining instrumentation, sampling, administration, data analysis and reporting requirements for the evaluation.

Use of the DEM has enabled Rhode Island's DCBP to focus with limited resources on assessment of key facets of the project's development and its results. In the earlier phases of the project formative evaluation was emphasized, whereas summative evaluation received greater attention in the latter phases of implementation. Appendix A contains a sample program design and evaluation workplan for the Education Information Services component of dissemination, a component funded through state funds, and the federally-funded DCBP.

---

[3]Allen, Carter. "What is the Discrepancy Evaluation Model?". Evaluation Research Center, University of Virginia. August 21, 1973.

Approach

Evaluations were carried out on a regular basis, with information services, conferencing assistance and targeted communications as the foci. Data were generally collected from the clients in survey format. Information services were most often assessed through a stratified random sample of the various client groups -- teachers, administrators, Department of Education staff and personnel from institutions of higher education, whereas other services, which were most often provided directly to Department of Education staff, generally involved assessment of the total population served.

Highlights of evaluation findings prepared by external evaluators will be described for information services and for services supported directly, in whole or part, through the DCBP grant. Summary level results will be described. The reader is referred to the project's quarterly reports for a more detailed presentation of the findings.

Findings: Information Services

Quality and impact of information services were judged through questions that yielded both formative and summative data. Examples of areas addressed during the five-year span of the DCBP are:

- purpose of information request
- portion of information received appropriate to the request
- usefulness/value of information provided
- role of information in solving problems
- estimated amount of time saved in researching the topics
- numbers and groups of people affected
- effects on the organization
- extent of change and/or types of action taken

- clarity of information package and accompanying explanation
- promptness of response to information request
- overall quality of services
- comments and suggestions

Following are excerpts from the evaluation reports about EIS services. These are taken directly from the evaluators' reports and include summaries, conclusions and recommendations.

July, 1977 Report:

Requests for services varied across all categories and most often concerned project/program planning and curriculum development/ revision. Most respondents felt that the information received played a substantial role in solving the problem that had initiated the request although the information did not figure as the major component. Teachers, principals, students, parents, and supervisors were all seen as being affected by use of EIS information, with teachers and principals mainly being affected. In terms of highest number affected, the following groups were chosen by respondents in the following order: students, teachers, parents, principals and administrators.

The use of EIS services led to major and minor changes in goals and objectives, curriculum, school organization, teacher assignment and evaluation of students; to major changes in classroom organization; and to minor changes in teaching methods and teacher evaluation. In many cases, these changes consisted of the implementation of new programs and new methods of evaluation.

EIS overall services were evaluated by most respondents as "excellent." The quality of specific information provided was seen as "good" to "excellent," with materials being appropriate to requests and explanations of materials sent being clear. Thus, respondents seemed to be highly pleased with EIS services in general. Suggestions for improvement included the availability of more information as to the types of EIS services and specific areas that are covered, and the redesign of the EIS questionnaires in order to measure more effectively the impact of EIS.

June, 1978 Report:

The results of the feedback survey indicate that most of those persons receiving the information packages felt that the information was properly explained. In addition, the majority of the respondents indicated that the information was appropriate to their request. The information packages were perceived as providing people with new ideas, increasing awareness about available materials, and helping to formulate new avenues of inquiry. The respondents generally indicated that the service was prompt and saved them time they would have spent researching the material. Those persons returning the Feedback Survey generally rated the EIS service as "good" or "excellent."

The results of the impact survey indicate that people request EIS Information Packages to create awareness, aid in program/project planning, and to aid in curriculum development/revision. The majority of those returning the survey found the information to be "useful" or "very useful." The clientele groups named most often as being affected by the information were teachers, students, and administrators. The areas which experienced improvement/change as a result of the information package were goals or objectives, school organization, curriculum, administrative procedures, and staff development. Ten persons indicated that there was no discernible improvement/change. However, eight persons commented that it was too early to assess the impact of the information package. In general, the respondents view the information packages as useful and instrumental in affecting some changes within their schools or organizations.

Based on the results of both surveys, the following recommendations are appropriate:

1. In the future, the results of both surveys should be analyzed by individual client groups (i.e., teachers, administrators, state department personnel, and higher education personnel) so that differences in perception and need may be more successfully served.

2. Extension of the services and refinement of the search procedures should continue to be explored.

May, 1979 Report:

Results of the EIS assessment questionnaire indicate that the majority of EIS clients are satisfied with the service. In particular, respondents reported a high level of satisfaction with the clarity of the explanation about the information package, the promptness of the service, and the overall quality of the service (means of 3.16 - 3.90 on a 4-point scale to Questions 1, 6, and 7). Respondents reported somewhat less satisfaction with the appropriateness of the information to their specific request (means of 2.73 - 2.86 to Questions 2 and 3b).

Respondents perceived that the information provided by EIS was useful in many ways including providing new ideas and additional alternatives for decisionmaking. They also reported that it saved them hours of time they would have spent in researching the information themselves. Ninety percent of the respondents rated the promptness of EIS services as "excellent" or "good," and 87% rated the overall service provided by EIS as "excellent" or "good".

A comparison (by percentages) of the responses to the survey with respect to searches initiated by EIS staff and searches initiated by Program Development Consultants indicates little or no difference in the perceived quality of the search. Slight differences in responses were recorded for questions 2, 3B, and 6. EIS staff members are perceived more often as providing information appropriate to the request (question 2) and with greater promptness (question 6) than PDC staff members. PDC staff members are perceived as more often providing additional material that is also appropriate to the request (question 3B). Responses to all other questions were similar for EIS clients and PDC clients. Program Development Consultants conduct fewer searches than EIS staff members.

Based on the materials reported above, the following recommendations are appropriate:

1. EIS should continue to offer and to publicize the availability of its computerized search services to educational personnel throughout Rhode Island.

2. EIS should make every effort to define the searches so that clients are assured that all information relevant to their request is retrieved.

June, 1979 Report:

Responses to the impact survey yielded the following information. Most persons responding to question 1 indicating the need or purpose of their request, checked that their request was in relation to a "school district-wide" or "school-wide/agency-wide" need. Responses to question 1 indicate that the use of the information potentially affects a large number of educational personnel in Rhode Island.

In response to question 2, 74% of those returning the survey rated the information received as "useful" or "very useful" for their intended purposes.

Most persons responding to question 3 in which they checked what action they took after receiving the initial information, indicated that they "shared information with others." Other response

choices checked by at least eight persons were "ordered suggested information" and "contacted reference people." Ten persons also reported that "the information satisfied their need and they took no additional action."

Persons responding to question 4 indicated that they shared the information with many groups and individuals. Response choices checked by at least ten persons were "Peers/Colleagues," "Professional friends/Colleagues," "Superiors/Supervisors," "Staff," and "Committees."

In question 5, which was open-ended, respondents described what effect the information had on the program in their organization. Most persons indicated that the effects of the information occurred in the following categories: 1) to develop school programs and curriculum materials, 2) to provide data to aid in decisionmaking, and 3) to provide information for further study. A complete list of comments made by respondents regarding the effects of the information appears in Appendix B.

In question 6, which was also open-ended, respondents supplied additional comments regarding the services provided by EIS. The majority of persons responding to question 6 complimented EIS on the services provided. Typical comments included that the service was "prompt," "efficient," "courteous," and "helpful." Two respondents perceived that more information could be supplied in answer to their requests: 1) a longer printout of bibliographic information and 2) a "complete" package of information including more resources in addition to ERIC abstracts.

In conclusion, it must be noted that the return rate upon which this analysis was conducted was only 46%. In assessing the impact of the information received by EIS clients, it is necessary for a number of months to have elapsed for information to be analyzed and decisions made. Inevitably, during this lapse of time, some clients cannot recall the particulars of the search, and others are still studying the information for decisions yet to be made. Persons who responded to the survey indicated that the impact of the information provided by EIS is quite far-reaching among educational personnel in Rhode Island. Most respondents perceived that the request for information involved a school district-wide or school-wide/agency-wide need. The information was shared with a variety of groups and individuals. And a number of school programs and curriculum materials were developed and decisions made with the aid of information obtained from EIS.

In light of the data presented above, the following recommendations are appropriate.

1. The EIS should continue to provide quality service to the educational personnel of Rhode Island's school districts, Institutions of Higher Education, and the State Department of Education.

2. The EIS staff should examine the responses to the survey and determine areas that may need additional attention in light of the goals and philosophy about technical assistance provided by the State Department of Education.

August, 1979 Report:

Responses to the EIS effectiveness survey indicated satisfaction with the service:

- 92% of the persons responding to question 1 indicated that the explanation given about the contents of the information package was "clear" or "very clear."
- 62% of the persons responding to question 2 reported that "most" or "all" of the information received was appropriate to their request.
- According to the respondents, 38% of the information packages reflected in the survey contained additional information. Of the 16 persons responding to question 3, 68% evaluated the additional material as either "good" or "excellent" in relationship to their specific request.
- The responses to question 4 indicate that the EIS information package is utilized to 1) "increase awareness about the scope of materials available," 2) help formulate new questions or identify new avenues of inquiry," and 3) "reinforce present thinking."
- 75% of those responding perceived that the service saved them 4 hours or more of research time, indicating that EIS provides a time-saving service for educational personnel in Rhode Island.
- 88% of the 41 persons responding rated the promptness of the services provided by EIS as "excellent" or "good."
- 92% of the persons responding to question 7 rated the overall service provided by EIS as "excellent" or "good."
- A full report of the comments made by persons who responded to question 8 appear in Section II of this report. In general the comments are complimentary and/or provide information for consideration by the EIS staff.

The results of the survey were analyzed by the evaluator to determine if the responses of clients differ dependent upon who initiated the search: EIS staff or Program Development Consultants. The responses to questions 1, 2, 4-7 are similar for both groups. The responses to questions 3a and 3b indicate that Program Development Consultants provide more additional information in packets than is provided by EIS staff.

The survey results should be considered in light of the low return rate. As can be seen in Table 1, a comparison of return rates for similar EIS assessment surveys which were mailed separately to EIS clients by CRDC shows this to be a much lower rate of return.

Table 1

A Comparison of Return Rates for EIS Assessment Surveys, January, 1977 - June, 1979

Period of EIS Use	Report Date	Number of Surveys Sent	Number of Surveys Returned	Return Rate
Jan.-May, 1977[a]	July, 1977	49[c]	31	63%
July-Dec., 1977[a]	March, 1978	121[c]	77	64%
Jan.-April, 1978[a]	June, 1978	66[c]	38	58%
July-Dec., 1978[a]	May, 1979	153[d]	106	67%
Jan.-June, 1979[b]	August, 1979	148[d]	41	28%

[a]Mailed separately by CRDC (contractor)

[b]Mailed with information package

[c]The number of surveys sent for the first three periods represents a sample of the total number of searches conducted by EIS for those period

[d]The number of surveys sent for the last two periods is the total number of searches conducted by EIS during those period

The following recommendations are appropriate based on the responses to the survey and the data presented in Table 1:

1. EIS should continue to offer and to publicize the availability of its computerized search services to educational personnel throughout Rhode Island.

2. EIS and the evaluator should examine alternative survey procedures in an effort to increase the return rate.

The following conclusions were drawn from the impact survey data:

- Most respondents (32) reported the need or purpose of their request involved a school district-wide or school/agency-wide need, indicating that the use of the information potentially affects a large number of persons in education in Rhode Island.

- 45 respondents (68%) indicated that the information received was "useful" or "very useful" for their intended purposes.

- 31 respondents indicated that they shared the information with others. Other action taken included contacting reference people, ordering suggested information, and requesting additional information. 14 respondents indicated that the information did not satisfy their needs.

- Respondents shared the information with many groups and individuals, including "Peers/Colleagues" (29 responses), "Staff" (20 responses), "Superiors/Supervisors" (19 responses), "Professional friends/colleagues" (13 responses), and "Committees" and "Consultants/Specialists" (11 responses each).

- Information supplied by EIS was utilized in many productive ways, including as an aid in decisionmaking, to develop programs, courses, and curriculum materials, to prepare papers and reports, and to expand knowledge.

- Respondents over all reported a high degree of satisfaction with the services and information supplied by EIS. A few respondents reported, however, that the information received was inadequate and emphasized the need for a thorough presearch interview to best take advantage of the computerized service.

- A comparison of responses for searches initiated by EIS staff and searches initiated by Program Development Consultants revealed no substantive difference in the impact of information obtained or quality of service provided.

The table below presents a summary of three EIS impact report periods, from July 1977 through December 1978, showing the total number of EIS searches performed, the number of impact surveys distributed, and the rate of return.

EIS Impact: Summary of EIS Use

Period of EIS Use	Total Number of Searches	No. of Surveys Distributed	No. of Surveys Returned	% Return
July-Dec., 1977	285	100[a]	55	55%
Jan.-June, 1978	218	100[a]	46	46%
July-Dec., 1978	220	153[b]	73	48%

[a]Random sample of teachers, LEA administrators, IHE, and RIDE personnel.

[b]Total group of EIS clients.

An examination of the data presented in the table reveals that the number of searches conducted has decreased or remained the same over the 18-month period.

In light of the data presented above, the following recommendations are appropriate:

- The EIS should increase the number of persons to whom they provide quality service in Rhode Island's school districts, institutions of higher education, and the State Department of Education
- The EIS staff should examine the responses to the survey and determine areas that may need additional attention in light of the goals and philosophy about technical assistance provided by the State Department of Education.

June, 1980 Report:

Findings from the EIS impact survey yielded the following results. Based on the returns for question 1, 33% of the responses indicated EIS information was needed for school district-wide purposes. The next category of responses for information needed ranged from 11% to 13% and include the following categories: Classrooms/Departments, School-wide/Agency-wide, and One Department. The lowest need groupings ranged from 2% to 9% of the responses. EIS information in this group was needed for Personal Interest, One Classroom use, Few Individuals, and One Individual purposes.

It would seem that more requests were for needs impacting on larger units of school organization patterns. Fewer requests for EIS information were made by individuals who represented smaller and single units within a school organizational pattern.

Question 2 focused on the usefulness of the information. Seventy-nine percent (79%) found EIS information useful or very useful. Only 2% of the respondents found the information not useful. It seems that EIS provided useful informational services to a larger percentage of the clients served.

Question 3 focused on client actions taken as a result of EIS information received. Eighty percent (80%) of the responses seemed to show that clients were satisfied with EIS information and took action as a result. A breakdown of action showed that 51% of the client responses indicated sharing of information with others. Thirty-four percent (34%) of the client responses seem to indicate that a further seeking out of information or of individuals with the needed information was necessary.

Question 4 focused on identifying with whom the information was shared. Responses seem to indicate that Peers/Colleagues (29%) were the major recipients of the sharing process. Staff, Supervisors, Committees, and Professional Friends/Colleagues are categories with whom information was shared and represent a range of 13% to 17% of the responses. Consultant specialists and others represent a total of 10% of the responses. The Peer/Colleague group was the most important group for sharing the information received from EIS. Horizontal information flow is more substantial than vertical flow.

The August 1979 EIS Impact Survey Report states from January 1978 through December 1978, EIS conducted 438 searches. A comparison of EIS search figures with the 1979 Survey Report data seem to reflect a steady level of search requests is being maintained. From January 1979 through December 1979 the EIS Program served 210 clients with 425 computer searches. Fifty-five percent of the clients were new this year, indicating that awareness activities were bringing new users. Because of the low response rate to the effectiveness survey, no information is available concerning the effectiveness of EIS services. However, most clients who responded to the impact survey found the information useful. The majority used the information and shared it with others.

The evaluator recommends the following:

1. Increase the number of clients served through increased awareness activities.

2. Focus on developing a horizontal flow strategy which saturates a peer group level within a school organizational pattern concerned with a common or emerging interest. This information sharing by a peer group is important to educational change.

3. Focus on a vertical flow delivery system within a school organization in which an individual might request information be sent simultaneously to a second party whose organizational status is at a lower or higher level. This might magnify the impact of information for educational decision-making since there would be simultaneous reception of information at various levels which could be shared with peers at those levels.

4. Develop outreach techniques and materials for identifying and soliciting the concerns of larger school organizational units, (i.e., school-wide, agency-wide, department-wide) which go beyond normal awareness activities. Such a strategy might incorporate awareness and service features at the same time.

Findings: Coordination and Linkage Services

Assessment of coordination and linkage services varied somewhat in focus from the earlier to the latter stages of the DCBP. The shift in emphases generally reflected the project's development, with considerable attention in the first few years to the role of the Dissemination Advisory Group (DAG). Throughout the project's five-year history, assessment of effectiveness of dissemination services prevailed. Examples of the areas assessed pertaining to the the DAG include:

- understanding of the role and mission of the DAG, its short- and long-range objectives, and the role of the individual in relation to the new dissemination services being offered.
- satisfaction with information presented about activities of the DAG.
- perception of how well the DAG is progressing toward its objectives.
- frequency of attendance at DAG meetings.
- frequency with which information is received about the operation and objectives of the new dissemination unit.
- organization and productivity of DAG meetings.
- extent to which client's ideas and concerns are explored by the DAG and extent to which they have influenced the DAG.

- satisfaction with the work of the DAG
- additional comments and suggestions.

Examples of effectiveness of services examined through evaluation are:

- avenues of awareness of dissemination services
- understanding by the client of his/her role and responsibilities in using dissemination services, as well as the role and responsibilities of dissemination staff
- effectiveness of dissemination staff in identifying and responding to client needs
- problems with services
- accessibility of services and promptness of response
- overall quality of services and level of satisfaction
- usefulness of services
- willingness to pay for services
- comments and suggestions for additional services.

Following are excerpts from the evaluation reports as prepared by external evaluators. In the reports, DSU refers to Dissemination Services Unit; in October 1979 dissemination services were integrated with the Support Services Unit.

June, 1977 Report:

The Dissemination Advisory Group has been charged with a variety of tasks. The Coordinator of the DSU has undertaken the organization and operation of this group's activities through the year which have generally gone well. The responses to the instrument by DAG members indicates that the activities and the effectiveness of the group has been very good.

Ambiguity of group responses is found within the context of the objectives and the role/mission of the DAG. The variance in responses to the questions relating to this area suggests that some questions remain unanswered in the minds of the DAG membership.

The evaluator is cognizant of the problems of organizing an advisory group, particularly one which is comprised of organizational peers. However, in order for the group to function successfully in the next year cycle, certain changes would be necessary and the following recommendations are made:

1. Meetings of longer duration which occur less frequently may be desirable. This will allow more time between sessions for DAG members to review information and formulate suggestions for future action.

2. A work session should be undertaken, first within the DSU, and a subsequent session with the DAG members, to define the role/mission, short/long term objectives, and plan of action for next year's activities. This planning activity should be the first agenda item for the fall DAG meetings with the preliminary work undertaken and completed by the DSU staff members during the summer.

3. Finally, the coordinator of the DAG should meet individually with DAG members throughout the course of the summer to gather input for this planning activity.

In its first few months of existence, the DSU has undertaken a variety of activities with many units and bureaus at the RIDE. A synthesis of the responses to the instrument administered suggest that the majority of those receiving service are very satisfied with the quality and timeliness of the products requested. In addition, the DSU staff members appear to be undertaking their activities at a level which is perceived as effective and efficient.

Based upon this data, the evaluator feels that the DSU is operating extremely well, considering the short period of time it has been in operation. While the DSU is a new operation within the RIDE and some of the high praise for its activities may be related to the "honeymoon" relationship a new organization may experience in dealing with other groups, it does not seem reasonable to believe that a major portion of the evaluation data can be explained by this factor. Rather, the evaluator would suggest that the work undertaken and completed by the unit to this point has been generally well done and well received by the other organization staff members at the RIDE.

The following recommendation is made, however, based upon responses to the instrument:

DSU staff undertake a planning activity which would be culminated in the dissemination of a statement containing an overview of the priority areas of work for the unit for the next year. It seems apparent from the responses that some individuals are unclear about the future goals and activities of the DSU. This may serve to avoid problems in the 1977-78 year activities.

March, 1978 Report:

The responses of the Dissemination Advisory Group to the survey indicate that as a whole the group remains well informed about the operations/objectives of the DSU. In general, the group seems to be satisfied with the work of the DAG and understands the role/mission and objectives of the group. Although most members of the DAG find the meetings to be well organized and productive, some members do not feel that the meetings reflect their ideas and concerns. The responses to the open-ended questions indicated a variety of suggestions for improving communication with the DAG and for improving the services offered by the DSU.

The following recommendations are suggested by the results of the survey.

1. The DAG should examine alternative meeting times and formats in order to encourage greater attendance.

2. The communication system utilized to inform DAG members of the operation and objectives of the DSU should function as a two-way system so that DAG members may influence the activities/direction of the DAG to a greater degree.

3. The DAG should explore with the staff of the DSU additional ways to inform members of the LEAs and RIDE units of the services provided by the DSU.

The responses to the survey indicate that most clients are satisfied with the services provided by the Dissemination Services Unit. The majority of those receiving services are very satisfied with the quality and the timelines of the products requested. In addition, the DSU staff members appear to be undertaking their activities on a level which is perceived as effective and efficient.

The DSU has been in operation for over a year. Responses to a similar survey administered during Winter 1977, indicated that clients were also satisfied with the quality and timeliness of the DSU. It should be noted, however, that the survey of a year ago was distributed to 37 people, whereas the survey this year was distributed to 27 people.

In conclusion, it appears that the work undertaken and completed by the DSU has been of good quality and well received by the other organizational staff members at the RIDE.

The following recommendations appear to be appropriate based on the responses to the survey.

1. The DSU staff should continue to expand their services to persons and units/bureaus at RIDE.

2. The staff members of the DSU should continue to seek suggestions for additional ways that they might provide service to RIDE.

3. The staff of the DSU should seek more effective ways of informing people at RIDE of the services that they are are capable of providing.

July, 1978 Report:

Responses to the effectiveness survey indicate that clients are satisfied with the services provided by the Dissemination Services Unit. The persons returning the survey indicated that they are satisfied with the quality and the timelines of the products requested. In addition, the DSU staff members appear to be undertaking their activities on a level which is perceived as effective and efficient.

The DSU has been in operation for over a year. Responses to a similar survey administered during Winter 1978, indicated that clients were also satisfied with the quality and timeliness of the DSU. That survey was also distributed to 27 people. However, the return rate was higher for the June survey. The returns for the Sping survey included less negative responses than the winter survey.

In conclusion, it appears that the work undertaken and completed by the DSU has been of good quality and well received by the other organizational staff members at RIDE.

The following recommendations appear to be appropriate based on the responses to the survey.

1. The DSU staff should continue to expand and advertise their services to persons and units/bureaus at RIDE.

2. The staff members of the DSU should continue to seek suggestions for additional ways that they might provide service to RIDE.

June, 1979 Report:

Responses to the effectiveness survey indicate that clients are satisfied with the services provided by the Dissemination Services Unit. The persons returning the survey indicated that they are satisfied with the quality and the timelines of the products requested. In addition, the DSU staff members appear to be undertaking their activities on a level which is perceived as effective and efficient.

A comparison of the results of this survey with those reported in March, 1978 and July, 1989 indicates a slight increase in the use of the services provided by the DSU. Approximately 50% of the clients have previously used the services indicating satisfaction with prior service. While the other 50% who are new DSU clients indicate an expansion of services to additional people, the level of satisfaction with the services provided remains high across all three survey reporting periods.

In conclusion, the Dissemination Services Unit continues to provide quality services to the staff of the Rhode Island Department of Education.

The following recommendations appear to be appropriate based on the responses to the survey:

1. DSU should continue the expansion of their services to persons and units/bureaus at RIDE.

2. The staff members of the DSU should continue to expand the types of information/services they might provide to RIDE.

August, 1979 Report:

The following conclusions were drawn from the effectiveness survey:

- The DSU provides services to every level of State Department of Education personnel in a variety of offices. During the last six months they provided services to 42 persons representing at least 9 divisions within the state department.

- Most of the respondents (N=24) who used the service during the six-month period had previously utilized the services of the DSU. Other respondents learned about the service from the DSU staff (N=7), a Deputy Assistant Commissioner/Coordinator (N=8), or other sources (N=3). Some respondents learned of the service in more than one way, hence the number of responses to this question is more than 33.

- 32 respondents (97%) indicated that after the initial meeting with the DSU staff they "understood" or "completely understood" the services available to them through the DSU.

- All respondents (N=33; 100%) reported that the DSU staff members were "effective" or "totally effective" in identifying the area of need for the person using the service and then providing the services to meet that need.

- All respondents (N=33; 100%) indicated that they "understood" or "completely understood" their responsibility/role and the responsibility/role of the DSU staff regarding the activities to be undertaken.

- The 33 respondents (100%) reported that the quality of the services provided were "good" or "excellent."

- Likewise, all 33 respondents (100%) reported that they were "satisfied" or "extremely satisfied" with the services provided by the DSU.

- The services provided by the DSU staff were reported to be on time by all 33 respondents (100%).

- The respondents commented on the DSU services by indicating that the DSU staff was cooperative, responsive, and competent (N=5); and that the service was valuable and met identified needs (N=3). There was minor dissatisfaction with a time lag or an apparent change in priorities based on demands from other areas.

- Some additional services that DSU clients would like the staff to consider are workshops, editing, preparation of reports, and assistance in establishing a resource center. Two persons mentioned that the DSU could advertise their services more broadly.

The table below presents a summary of four DSU Effectiveness Survey periods from July 1977-June 1979. The table includes the number of persons served, the number of surveys distributed, the number of surveys returned, and the return rate.

DSU Effectiveness Survey: Summary of DSU Use

Period of DSU Use	Total No. of Persons Served	No. of Surveys Distributed	No. of Surveys Returned	% Return
July 1, 1977-Dec. 31, 1977	27	27[a]	18	67%
Jan. 1, 1978-June 30, 1978	27	27[a]	21	77%
July 1, 1978-Dec. 30, 1978	31	31[a]	22	71%
Jan. 1, 1979-June 30, 1979	42	42[a]	33	79%

[a]All persons receiving the services were surveyed.

An examination of the data presented indicates a clear increase in the number of persons served during the last year and particularly the last six months.

A comparison of the responses to the survey over the two-year period also indicated continued or increased satisfaction with the services provided.

The data presented above forms the basis for the following recommendations:

- The DSU should be continued as a service arm of the State Department of Education to the personnel within the department.

- The DSU should explore, through this continued extension of services, new areas of services that they might provide to RIDE personnel.

June, 1980 Report:

Based on the DCBP client effectiveness survey, the following conclusions were drawn:

- 32 individual staff members were served by DCBP during the review period, and they represented 17 different units within RIDE. This compares favorably with findings of past studies.

- DCBP activity supported, with the greatest frequencies, the following client groups: Inservice-Implementation Unit (27.6%); Bureau of Vocational-Technical Education (10.3%); and Support Services Unit (12.1%). A total of 50% of DCBP activity went to these three subdivisions of RIDE;*

- 85% of the services requested by clients concerned assistance in developing communications targeted toward specific groups.*

- The services and products delivered by DCBP are of good quality and meet the needs and expectations of the staff receiving them. Of the 37 product evaluations, 31 (83.8%) indicated that their needs were completely met; 33 (89.2%) that expectations were met; 32 (86.5%) considered what they received to be of excellent quality. It should be noted that only one product deviated significantly from this trend by receiving a rating of not at all. Commentary accompanying the assessment explains the deviation accurately; "No (sic) this unit's fault."

- The responses to item four for 27 (72.9%) of the product evaluations were accompanied by commentary. The content of that commentary was very positive and favorable with regard to what was delivered.

*The data only include the services for which effectiveness surveys were distributed.

- all of the respondents, 26 (100%), perceived the unit to be readily accessible and quick to respond to requests

- most of the respondents, 21 (84%), indicated that the services or products or both were helpful in communicating or presenting information. One respondent (4%) did not find the services or products helpful. Three respondents (12%) did not respond.

- These data support the observed trends in the commentary provided to the free response items in the previous section of the survey.

- Conference assistance service was used by 11 (42.6%) of the respondents, 8 of whom indicated that it was very useful.

- Conference Alert bulletin was used by 17 (65%) of the respondents, 10 of whom indicated that it was very useful.

- Audio-visual equipment service was used by 19 (73%) of the respondents, 14 of whom indicated that it was very useful.

- Printing assistance service was used by 19 (73%) of the respondents, 15 of whom indicated that it was very useful.

- Consulting services on dissemination procedures and products were used by 21 (81%) of the respondents of whom 15 indicated that they were very useful.

It should be noted that the category of not very useful was not checked by any respondent throughout the survey.

An increased level of activity in DCBP began in January of 1979. An examination of the data presented indicates clearly the maintenance of the increased level of activity for the nine-month period from July, 1979 to March 31, 1980.* Quality of service, products, or both are extremely satisfactory. Most notable is the positive client perception of the personnel who are responsible for the delivery of that service or product. The majority of those using the services of DCBP are willing to financially support the efforts of the unit by paying for services received.

The recommendations, based on the data presented, are as follows:

- DCBP should be continued as a support service to the staff of the Rhode Island Department of Education.

- DCBP should begin immediately to explore various funding possibilities that include direct charges to those using their services.

*The data only include the services for which effectiveness surveys were distributed.

- DCBP should continue to highlight the units and activities by conducting workshops, sponsoring awareness activities, and preparation of service announcements emphasizing what is available.

- DCBP should investigate the standardization of selected aspects of preparing communications for specific groups.

- DCBP should investigate the preparation of materials for disseminating information regarding general interest topics which RIDE personnel may use regardless of unit affiliation.

- DCBP should seek a cost-efficient dissemination strategy for single incident requests for service from RIDE units.

- DCBP should investigate the possibility of individual planning with units of RIDE in order to anticipate their needs, and thus to identify work which might be accomplished in months of decreased activity.

Summary

During the five years of Rhode Island's DCBP, the services provided by the project have been assessed on a regular basis by external evaluators. The evaluations have been carried out primarily through survey methods, with feedback on information services obtained most often through stratified random sampling of client groups and reaction to other DCBP services through a census approach.

Results from the evaluations consistently pointed to favorable ratings on characteristics of the services being examined. Information services and communications services (design of targeted communications, conferencing, etc.) were generally viewed as effective by recipients of these services. Also, with respect to assessment of impact of information services, it was often shown that the information was shared with others, aided in making minor and major decisions or program changes, and had an impact on others -- such as students and colleagues. Reaction to the DAG was generally favorable but reflected, especially in its earliest stages, the need to achieve greater role clarity and to increase participation in meetings.

Program recommendations of the evaluators most often focused on increasing awareness of information services to expand the number of clients being served. Early recommendations pertaining to the DAG addressed the need for increased planning, as well as design efforts to increase participation in the DAG and to more effectively use ideas obtained through that process. Latter stage recommendations focused on increasing the number of users of services and attending to institutionalization efforts such as incremental funding of services, because the evaluation data supported the continuation of the DCBP as a service arm of the Department.

V. INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Background

Programs initially supported with Federal funds often face a common problem, namely, continuing to operate when Federal financial support is terminated. Securing support for state-level dissemination services in Rhode Island has been addressed and partially achieved. That is, dissemination program components such as information services and linkage, in existence prior to receipt of the DCBP grant, are supported by state funds and are "institutionalized"; however, most services provided directly through the DCBP will not be continued.

Rhode Island's plan to institutionalize services provided through the DCBP called for a pooling of funds from multiple program sources to provide needed services. Such support, it was projected, would be obtained if the following conditions were met:

- a need for service;
- positive reaction to services previously provided through the grant; and
- availability of funds.

The next section provides an overview of efforts made to implement the plan to institutionalize the DCBP. Appendix B contains a complete description of the institutionalization effort, including an analysis of the strengths of the approach and its deficiencies and problems.

Overview of Approach

A multiple-stage process was initiated during the last four months of the project to achieve institutionalization of dissemination activities supported by the Dissemination Capacity Building Project (DCBP).

Implementation of the process involved: holding meetings with bureau-level managers to explore funding possibilities to continue dissemination services, preparation of an information package, price list and internal agreement form, preparation of cost estimate for specific services desired, and seeking of final approval of the plan.

Results

In carrying out the process described above, approximately $11,000 was identified to support dissemination activities as called for in various programs throughout the Department. A majority of these funds was earmarked for personnel, with the remaining dollars set aside for materials. The $11,000 would have provided for the continuation of 1.6 full-time equivalents for a three and one-half month period. If additional projects that were under consideration at the time of the Commissioner's decision were accepted, the known funding support would have continued project staff up to an additional three and one-half months. The design was to continue to identify and provide services, as needed, on an ongoing basis thereafter with funds available for the proposed services.

A review of the proposal by the Personnel Review Committee yielded a lukewarm reaction to the proposal. A more positive perspective was not adopted because known available funds would carry project staff only a few months beyond the expiration of Federal funding for DCBP services. Similarly, the Commissioner of Education viewed the proposal as a bandaid approach rather than a solution to continuing dissemination services. Therefore, he did not approve the approach.

As a result of this action, one staff member was laid off at the end of the grant period and the second staff member whose salary has been supported by DCBP funds was moved into a differe position in the

Department. The only services to be continued by other Support Services staff are the Master Calendar/Conference Alert and the maintenance and coordination of distribution of the Department's audio-visual equipment.

Primary DCBP services lost to the Department include the development of targeted communications, conferencing assistance, dissemination support to the Local Planning and Assessment Process (LPAP), and coordination of dissemination services.

APPENDIX A

Sample Program and Evaluation Designs:

- Dissemination Capacity Building Program (FY'80)
- Education Information Services (FY'81)

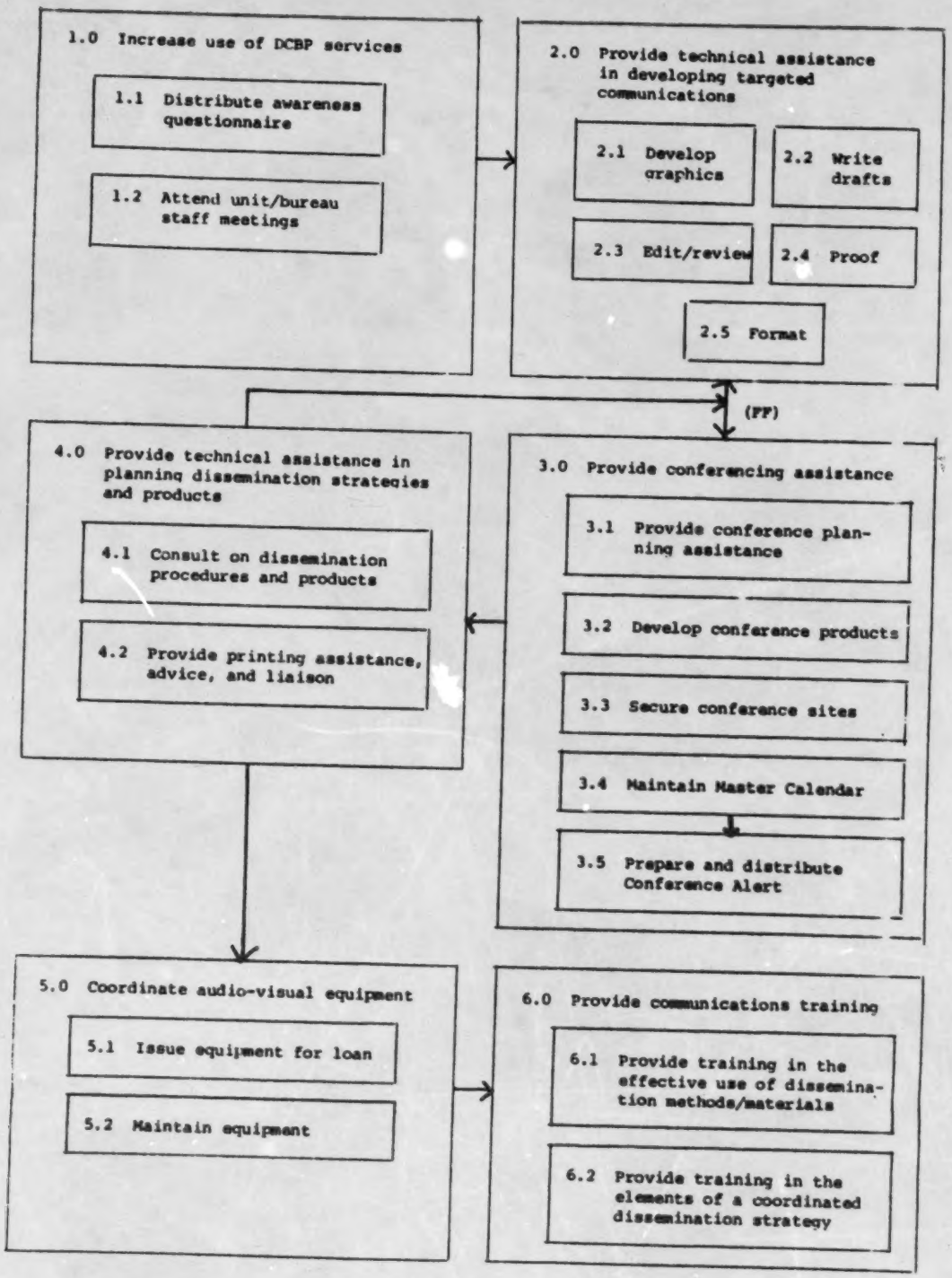
DISSEMINATION CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM
PROGRAM DESIGN (FY 80)

The Dissemination Capacity Building Program (DCBP) is located within the Support Services Unit, Bureau of Technical Assistance, Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). In addition to the communications services described in this program design, the DCBP contains another component called the Education Information Services (EIS). A separate program design narrative and evaluation workplan have been developed for the EIS.

The primary function of the DCBP is to facilitate and organize comcomunications within the Rhode Island Department of Education and between RIDE and outside clients. Services include: 1) providing technical assistance in preparing communications aimed at specific audiences; 2) providing assistance in arranging conferences; 3) providing technical assistance in planning dissemination strategies and products; 4) coordinating audio-visual equipment; and 5) providing communications training.

Approximately nine major communications products are produced each quarter. A client survey used to assess the effectiveness of DCBP services is administered regularly. DCBP "Request for Services" forms are also tabulated to determine the frequency of use of DCBP services.

DISSEMINATION CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM


1.0 Increase use of DCBP services
1.1 Distribute awareness questionnaire
1.2 Attend unit/bureau staff meetings
2.0 Provide technical assistance in developing targeted communications
2.1 Develop graphics
2.2 Write drafts
2.3 Edit/review
2.4 Proof
2.5 Format
(FF)
4.0 Provide technical assistance in planning dissemination strategies and products
4.1 Consult on dissemination procedures and products
4.2 Provide printing assistance, advice, and liaison
3.0 Provide conferencing assistance
3.1 Provide conference planning assistance
3.2 Develop conference products
3.3 Secure conference sites
3.4 Maintain Master Calendar
3.5 Prepare and distribute Conference Alert
5.0 Coordinate audio-visual equipment
5.1 Issue equipment for loan
5.2 Maintain equipment
6.0 Provide communications training
6.1 Provide training in the effective use of dissemination methods/materials
6.2 Provide training in the elements of a coordinated dissemination strategy

DCBP

Goal: To organize and facilitate communications within the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and between RIDE and outside clients.

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
1.0 To increase the use of the DCBP by promoting DCBP services within RIDE	Implemented by Communications Specialists, and Coordinator, Support Services Unit Audience RIDE staff Time January-February, 1980 Locale RIDE Materials DCBP awareness questionnaire Activities 1.1 Distribute DCBP awareness questionnaire 1.2 Attend Unit/bureau staff meetings	• Tabulate number and origin of DCBP "Request for Services" forms

DCBP

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
2.0 To provide technical assistance in developing targeted communications	Implemented by Communications Specialists Audience RIDE staff Time Ongoing Locale RIDE Materials • Brochures • Booklets • Reports • Flyers/posters • Slide-tapes • Transparecies Activities 2.1 Develop graphics 2.2 Write drafts 2.3 Edit/review 2.4 Proof 2.5 Format	• Administer client survey assessing the effectiveness of DCBP services • Review DCBP "Request for Services" forms • Review Weekly Activity Reports

DCBP

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
3.0 To provide conferencing assistance	Implemented by Communications Specialists Audience RIDE staff Time Ongoing Locale RIDE Materials • Conference checklists • Sample conference materials/ models • Conference facilities information • Master calendar • Conference alert • Conference products Activities 3.1 Provide conference planning assistance 3.2 Develop conference products 3.3 Secure conference sites 3.4 Maintain Master calendar 3.5 Prepare and distribute Conference Alert	• Administer client survey assessing the effectiveness of DCBP services • Review DCBP "Request for Services" forms • Review Weekly Activity Reports

DCBP

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
4.0 To provide technical assistance in planning dissemination strategies and products	**Implemented by** Communications Specialists, and Coordinator, Support Services Unit **Audience** RIDE staff **Time** Ongoing **Locale** RIDE **Materials** • Print samples (paper, graphics, etc.) • Product models • Sample dissemination plan • State plans, federal proposals, projects • "Request for Services" form **Activities** 4.1 Consult on dissemination procedures and products 4.2 Provide printing assistance, advice, and liason	• Review DCBP "Request for Services forms • Review Weekly Activity Reports

DCBP

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
5.0 To coordinate audio-visual equipment	Implemented by Communications Specialists Audience RIDE staff Time Ongoing Locale RIDE Materials • Tape Recorders • Screens • Projectors (35mm; 16 mm; film strip; overhead) Activities 5.1 Issue equipment for loan 5.2 Maintain equipment	• Review log of equipment use • Review Weekly Activity Reports

DCBP

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
6.0 To provide communications training	Implemented by Communications Specialists Audience RIDE staff Time Ongoing Locale RIDE Materials Materials listed in objectives 2.0 through 4.0 used for training activities Activities 6.1 Provide training in the effective use of dissemination methods and materials 6.2 Provide training in the elements of a coordinated dissemination strategy	• Review "Request for Services" forms

EDUCATION INFORMATION SERVICES
PROGRAM DESIGN (FY 81)

The Education Information Services (EIS) is located within the Support Services Unit, Bureau of Technical Assistance, Rhode Island Department of Education. The EIS provides RI educators with convenient access to information produced by researchers, developers, and practitioners in education throughout the country. A primary source of information is the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), a national computerized educational information system. Two major components of the ERIC system are Research in Education and Current Index of Journals in Education. The EIS uses DIALOG, an on-line retrieval system, to access ERIC, and has a terminal located in the Support Services Unit. In addition to ERIC, the EIS maintains in the Support Services Unit various information files and resources on a wide range of educational topics.

The EIS promotes awareness of its services, and awareness activities are assessed by tabulating the number of awareness brochures distributed, requests for information searches, and conferences attended (to explain EIS services). An ongoing evaluation of the information provided in response to specific requests is conducted by distributing an assessment survey with information search packets.

EIS

Goal: To link Rhode Island educators with local, regional and national sources of educational information

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
1.0 To conduct EIS awareness activities	Implemented by EIS Consultant; Program Development Consultants Audience RI educators Time Ongoing Locale RIDE, local school districts, and in-state conference sites Materials EIS awareness brochure Activities 1.1 Distribute brochures 1.2 Attend conferences and explain EIS services 1.3 Provide training in use of EIS services	Tabulate number of brochures distributed, requests for information searches, and conferences attended

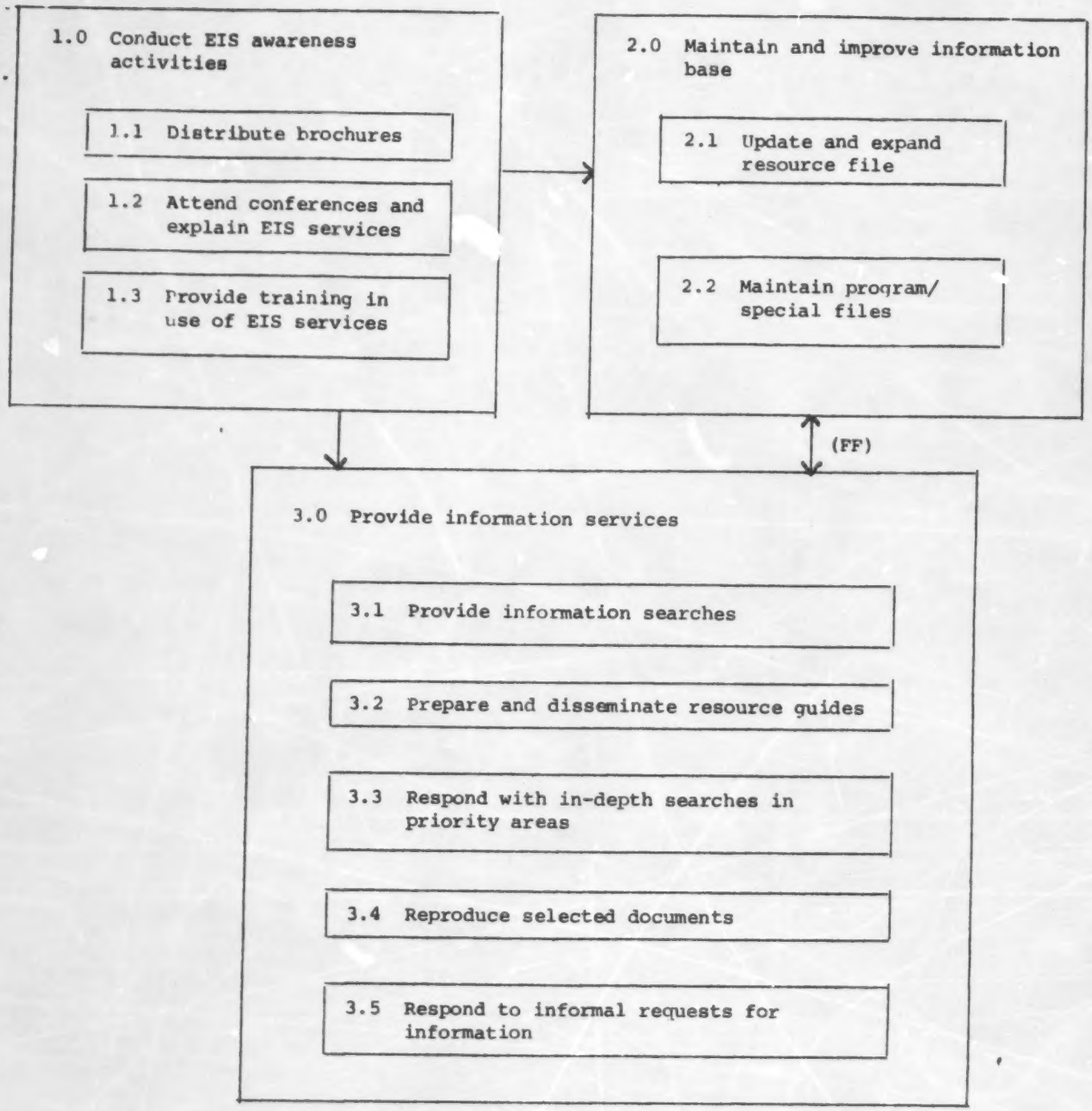
EIS

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
2.0 To maintain and improve the information base	<u>Implemented by</u> EIS Consultant <u>Audience</u> RI educators <u>Time</u> Ongoing <u>Locale</u> Support Services Unit <u>Materials</u> • Resource files • Program/special files • ERIC <u>Activities</u> 2.1 Update and expand resource files 2.2 Maintain program/special files	Review catalogue of resource files

EIS

OBJECTIVES	METHODS/ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
3.0 To provide information services	Implemented by EIS Consultant; Program Development Consultants Audience RI educators Time Ongoing Locale Support Services Unit Materials • Resource guides • Information searches • Reproduced documents Activities 3.1 Provide information searches in educational topics 3.2 Prepare and disseminate resource guides in high priority areas 3.3 Respond with in-depth searches in priority areas (e.g., LPAP) 3.4 Reproduce selected documents 3.5 Respond to informal requests for information	• Administer EIS Assessment Survey to determine effectiveness of information searches (survey is included in search packets • Review data from EIS computer analysis study

EDUCATION INFORMATION SERVICES


1.0 Conduct EIS awareness activities
1.1 Distribute brochures
1.2 Attend conferences and explain EIS services
1.3 Provide training in use of EIS services
2.0 Maintain and improve information base
2.1 Update and expand resource file
2.2 Maintain program/ special files
(FF)
3.0 Provide information services
3.1 Provide information searches
3.2 Prepare and disseminate resource guides
3.3 Respond with in-depth searches in priority areas
3.4 Reproduce selected documents
3.5 Respond to informal requests for information

APPENDIX B

"Examination of Rhode Island's Approach to Institutionalizing Dissemination Services Funded Through the Dissemination Capacity Building Project"

(December, 1981)

EXAMINATION OF RHODE ISLAND'S APPROACH TO
INSTITUTIONALIZING DISSEMINATION SERVICES FUNDED THROUGH THE
DISSEMINATION CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT

(December, 1981)

Background

Programs initially supported with federal funds often face a common problem, namely, continuing to operate when federal financial support is terminated. Securing support for state-level dissemination services in Rhode Island has been addressed and partially achieved. That is, dissemination program components in existence prior to receipt of the DCBP grant are supported by state funds and are "institutionalized"; however, most services provided directly through the DCBP, will not be continued.

Services primarily supported by DCBP funds included conferencing assistance, development of targeted communications, maintenance and coordination of use of the Department's audio-visual equipment, and technical assistance in the design of effective coordination strategies.

Rhode Island's plan to institutionalize these services called for a pooling of funds from multiple program sources to provide needed services. Such support, it was projected, would be obtained if the following conditions were met:

- a need for service;
- positive reaction to services previously provided through the grant; and
- availability of funds.

The next section provides a description of efforts made to implement the plan to institutionalize the DCBP. This is followed by an analysis of the strengths of the approach and its deficiencies and problems.

Description of Approach

A seven-step process was initiated during the last four months of the project to achieve institutionalization of dissemination activities supported by the Dissemination Capacity Building Project (DCBP). These steps are described below.

1. A series of meetings with selected Deputy Assistant Commissioners (DACs) was held in order to explore in a concrete manner the concept of funding dissemination activities through program dollars. The DACs from Vocational Education and the Bureau of Technical Assistance were contacted first because these bureaus have been the heaviest users of dissemination services, followed thereafter by meetings with DACs from other bureaus who have used dissemination services.

2. An information package (see Attachment A) was prepared which:

   (a) described dissemination services in terms of the types of products available and the range of dissemination services available for each;

   (b) listed the basic steps and responsibilities of dissemination staff and the recipients of services;

   (c) suggested points to consider in identifying needed dissemination services; and

   (d) showed for each needed service relevant cost information in terms of personnel, materials and travel, and which specified the due date for the product.

3. A price list was prepared for internal use which could serve as a basis for preparing cost estimates on various services requested. Then, follow-up meetings with program coordinators and consultants were held to detail services desired. Where appropriate, additional meetings with DACs were held to help ensure continuing communications at that level.

4. An internal agreement format was prepared. It was intended for use by the programs being served and by the Support Services Unit which houses DCBP services.

5. A review by the Budget Bureau of cost information for each of the programs requesting services was scheduled. The purpose of this review was to determine availability of funds and assurances that funds could be allocated for the designated service.

6. Final approval of the plan was sought. This included two stages: Personnel Committee Review and Commissioner's review and approval.

Results

Based on Steps 1-6, as outlined above, approximately $11,000 was identified to support dissemination activities as called for in various programs throughout the Department. A majority of these funds was earmarked for personnel, with the remaining dollars set aside for materials. The following projects with support funds were identified:

- Development of descriptive information brochure on civil rights programs.
- Redesign and updating of directory for sex equity program.
- Redevelopment and updating of parent involvement and training awareness brochure.
- Preparation of informational brochure describing new competency-based certification requirements for Vocational Education.
- Development of informational brochure for Jobs for Rhode Island Graduates project.
- Graphics and layout for 25-30 curriculum guides in Vocational Education.
- Preparation of two training manuals, one in Spanish and the other in Portuguese, for parents of special education children.
- Development of a booklet to delineate the promising practices identification process and to describe initial products for special education training.
- Preparation of a report which describes the Rhode Island State Facilitator Center and presents statistical data and evaluative information about the center.

Additional projects under consideration were:

- Development and production of a Digest of Education and Training Programs which describes training programs both at and below the collegiate level, which reports supply and demand data for occupational training below the baccalaureate level, and which includes a directory of the sponsors of the program (approximately $9,000);

- Dissemination of information regarding Teacher Centers (approximately $1,500); and
- Dissemination services to the State Vocational Education Advisory Committee (funding level undetermined).

The first grouping of projects, which totaled approximately $11,000, would have provided for the continuation of 1.6 full-time staff equivalents until February 1982. If projects under consideration were accepted, the funding support would have continued through March and possibly June 1982, depending upon the number of projects and funding levels eventually accepted.

As internal agreements were being prepared, the Budget Office continued its review of the projects for which there was a firm commitment of funds from the respective program managers. The results of this review indicated that such funds were available and could be used for the publics specified. This moved the institutionalization effort to the next step, namely, review and approval by higher authorities of the proposed dissemination projects and procedures.

A review of the information (presented above) by the Personnel Review Committee yielded a lukewarm reaction to the proposal. A more positive perspective was not adopted because known available funds would carry project staff only a few months beyond the expiration of Federal funding for DCBP services. Similarly, the State Commissioner of Education viewed the proposal as a bandaid rather than a solution to continuing DCBP-funded dissemination services. Therefore, he did not approve the approach.

As a result of this action, one staff member was laid off at the end of the grant period and the second staff member whose salary has been supported by DCBP funds was moved into a different position in the Department. The only services to be continued by other Support Services staff are the

Master Calendar/Conference Alert and the maintenance and coordination of distribution of the Department's audio-visual equipment.

Primary DCBP services lost to the Department include the development of targeted communications, conferencing assistance, dissemination support to the Local Planning and Assessment Process (LPAP), coordination of dissemination services, and on-going training of Department staff in related skills.

Analysis of the Institutionalization Effort in Rhode Island

Based on the draft document prepared by Larry Vaughan (February, 1980) entitled "An Educational Manager's Guide to Planning Program Institutionalization," the following analysis is presented which examines both strengths and problems associated with Rhode Island's approach to institutionalization. It is hoped that this analysis might be useful to other states seeking to institutionalize its dissemination activities.

Background. Before proceding with an examination of institutionalization of dissemination services in Rhode Island, there is a need to recognize that dissemination services have, for the most part, been institutionalized since 1975-76. That is, within the Bureau of Technical Assistance, information, linkage and management responsibilities are in place and are supported by state dollars. Within the Bureau, there is also a staff development unit which offers, primarily through Federal funds, training to local school district personnel in National Diffusion Network (NDN) Programs, basic skills, special education, LPAP and other areas as needed.

The goal of the DCBP grant was "*strengthening*" of the dissemination model. Heavy emphasis in the grant was placed on improving information services and two-way communications between the Department and its publics and

among its clients groups. In addition, the project was designed to strengthen the coordination of dissemination services and activities.

Information services were made available to local school districts, to higher education personnel and to State Department staff. Efforts were made to strengthen local and regional program files, to build a comprehensive needs assessment file, and to design, produce and distribute resource guides directed toward achieving equity and/or addressing high-priority topics. Targeted communications and conferencing assistance services were provided primarily to Department staff whose program directly serve local school districts; therefore, most frequently served were the Bureaus of Technical Assistance, Vocational Education, and Grants and Regulations. In essence, these latter services provided internal support to assist program managers in communicating effectively as they served the needs of their client groups.

During the fourth year and final year of the DCBP grant, the coordinator and secretary for the project were no longer supported by DCBP funds. However, by the close of the DCBP grant the Demonstration Specialist and the Communications Specialist were dependent upon DCBP funds; these positions and services were not funded when the grant ended.

Examination of Failure Characteristics. Vaughan cites a variety of factors perceived to be associated with failure of project institutionalization efforts. Each of these factors will be analyzed briefly with respect to the status of Rhode Island's DCBP.

- Lack of Clear Program Goals.

  This factor did not appear to be a problem for the Rhode Island DCBP. This is because the initial proposal for Federal funding clearly specified goals and objectives for the project. These goals and objectives were kept in the forefront of all continuing proposals over the five-year period and served as the framework for determining project activities.

- Lack of Perceived Need.

  In the Rhode Island project, perceived needs were identified and project activities were designed to meet the needs. However, with the serious financial crises facing state education agencies, the needs which the dissemination project should address were not sufficiently competitive with needs emerging from external pressure sources such as Special Education and Basic Skills. It should be noted that the Rhode Island DCBP primarily provided an internal support structure for state staff to serve the needs of local school districts and that internal visibility without external visibility may have hampered its progress toward institutionalization. Only the information service component, a component not supported through the DCBP dollars, offered services extensively beyond the state agency client group.

- Lack of Key Support.

  With respect to this factor, although support of several key decisionmakers was obtained, it may have arrived too late. One of the major reasons for this rests with the uncertain Federal financial situation that confronted state agencies since Spring, 1981. Financial commitments could not be made by the key decisionmakers about earmarking of funds for dissemination activities because they themselves were working with an unknown Federal funding level. This situation delayed progress toward compiling a pool of funds to carry out needed dissemination activities.

- Program Isolation.

  Basically, program isolation was not a problem with the Rhode Island project. However, the concept of program isolation might be considered as a matter of degree. In several bureaus of the state agency, DCBP services were frequently tapped and were highly visible, while other bureaus and the Commissioner's Office seldom requested services. Although a number of attempts were made to increase frequent usage among the underserved state agency client groups, the results were successful only in some instances. Perhaps the most serious gap in the program's operation was in not serving the needs of the top levels of management. This may be more of a problem in a small state agency such as Rhode Island.

- Lack of Evaluation Capability.

  The Rhode Island project did not lack evaluation capability. It had a strong evaluation component which regularly sought feedback from client groups at all levels of service -- information, conferencing, targeted communications, etc. Without exception, reaction from the recipients of service were positive. Further, the project continually used an internal evaluation structure to complement external evaluation information.

- Overly Complex Image.

  This factor did not appear to be a problem with Rhode Island's project. Procedures for accessing service were quite streamlined, especially for a bureaucratic organization. That is, a client wishing to receive a particular service could go directly to the service provider or the linker to obtain services. Also, descriptions of the types of services available were prepared and distributed or discussed on a regular basis to aid the potential client in understanding and using available services.

- Uncertain Program Outcomes.

  Because of the types of services offered through the DCBP, this factor was clearly not a problem. Program outcomes were generally reflected in concrete products such as an information package, a brochure or booklet, an invitational conference package, a specific dissemination strategy or plan, or training in a given area of need.

- High Operation Costs.

  In the case of Rhode Island's DCBP project costs were confined primarily to two technical support staff, the Demonstration Specialist and the Communications Specialist. Only minor costs for consumable supplies were incurred, and these costs were supported by DCBP funds.

- Funding Agency Regulations.

  Although there were no serious agency regulations to hamper funding, the complexity of the institutionalization plan might have been problematic. This is because pooling funds from multiple bureaus and diverse programs within those bureaus would have required a complex process for allocation of salaries and fringe benefits.

- Lack of Local Ownership.

  The involvement of key agency officials was present in the early development and implementation stages of the project. However, as the project moved into its second and third years of Federal funding the frequent contacts with management in bureaus other than the Bureau of Technical Assistance were seriously diminished. Informal contacts were resumed during the fourth and fifth years of the project, but it is clear that the ownership was strongest in the bureau in which services were housed and relatively strong in the two other bureaus where services were frequently rendered. The most serious deficit here was the lack of project ownership in other bureaus and at the highest management level.

- Lack of Technical Assistance.

  The technical assistance required to carry out the DCBP was obtained in the early stages of the project. As time progressed and staff skills were developed, the need for technical assistance was diminished.

Technical assistance problems did not appear to hinder the project's success and, in fact, the expertise of the staff was viewed as an asset by the clients.

- "Take the Money and Run."

  This problem was not present in the Rhode Island project. The plan for pooling funds was discussed during the early years of the project and was further developed during the final six months of the project. The intent was always to identify alternative funding sources to support the program after Federal funding was gone.

- Unstable Local Finances.

  First, it should be understood here that the definition of "local" would actually refer to "state" in the Rhode Island DCBP. At the time that the plan for pooling of resources was being addressed, extensive Federal cuts in education were being made. A similar situation was occurring at the state level. These financial crises were, perhaps, the most serious factor which influenced the failure of the Rhode Island project to institutionalize the services supported by the DCBP. In fact, this factor appears to be the ultimate cause affecting project institutionalization.

Examination of Success Characteristics. Each of the success characteristics cited by Vaughan will be reviewed here in light of Rhode Island's attempts at achieving full institutionalization of its DCBP.

- Local (State) Initiative and Planning.

  In the early phases of Rhode Island's DCBP, various state agency decisionmakers were involved in the planning and implementation of the project. This occurred through a Dissemination Advisory Group which was representative of the various bureaus in the state agency. This group continued to operate for about two years, at which time an informal approach to receiving feedback was instituted. This informal approach was complemented by information obtained from the program evaluation activities of the project. In essence, this success characteristic was present in the Rhode Island project.

- Multiple Channels of Communication.

  This factor needed to be strengthened in the Rhode Island project. Whereas several informal channels of information flow were utilized, these might have been extended to include, on a more extensive basis, formal communication channels. The Management Team level, for example, is one communication network that might have been tapped more frequently; however, it needs to be recognized that the competing demands for the use of that channel are high.

- Public Relations.

The components of the Rhode Island project that were the subject of the institutionalization effort provided services primarily on an internal basis. That is, the clients of these services were state department staff. This thrust, therefore, gave the project only very limited and indirect visibility. In speaking of public relations for this project, it must then be recognized that "PR" refers to visibility within the state agency itself. In that respect, public relations was conducted, for the most part, by the project staff who operated both in an initiative and responsive mode to serve client needs. This included increased frequency by project staff in physically going out to other units, meeting with the people in their locations to work with them on the dissemination needs of their programs. It should be noted that the stronger initiative emphasis took place during the final year of the project and should have been done sooner.

- Developing a Group of Advocates.

An advocacy group was established for the DCBP project. This group emerged, as would be expected, from those bureaus who most frequently used the services, e.g., Bureau of Technical Assistance and Bureau of Vocational Education. The group of advocates, however, were primarily the program coordinators and their staffs and did not tend to include the higher level decisionmakers such as the Deputy Assistant Commissioners. The lack of strong advocacy at that level, with the exception of about three high-level managers may have hampered the success of the project in achieving institutionalization.

- Establishing Incremental Commitments.

On a gradual basis, varying types and levels of commitments to the DCBP were achieved. For example, support for project management and clerical staff were provided to the project over time. However, a serious error occurred in that a graduated system of financial support for services rendered in areas such as conferencing and development of targeted communications did not take place. During the last two years of the project it might have been advisable to initiate a partial reimbursement system for projects that included dissemination activities, especially when funds existed to support them. This was not done in Rhode Island and this may have been one of the more crucial success characteristics that was lacking in the Rhode Island project. Only when Federal support was at a stage of being totally discontinued was there a major effort to put into place a system of financial support by recipients of services for the services provided.

- Staff Development.

During the life of the project, project expertise was upgraded in several ways. First, staff members had the opportunity to participate in various types of training such as interpersonal communications

skills, public relations, effective use of media (emphasis on the news media), preparation of written and audio-visual materials and publications and training on programs and procedures within the state agency itself. Also, expertise of project staff was built through the experience of staff in serving many programs within the department. Through interaction over time with a wide range of department programs, knowledge about the objectives, content and procedures of these programs proved helpful both in establishing more coordinated and effective dissemination strategies and services. Hence, staff development is a success characteristic which was clearly evident in the Rhode Island project.

- Alternative Support Strategies.

  The overall plan for institutionalization of the Rhode Island DCBP was established in a general manner prior to submitting the initial proposal for Federal funds. That plan called for a pooling of funds from various state agency programs which were supported through state and/or Federal funds. Therefore, a single support system was identified, State Education Agency programs, but within that system existed potential multiple funding sources. A weakness here may have been that, although many funding sources might possibly be tapped, the arena of funding sources was limited to one, the State Education Agency itself.

Summary

Rhode Island's approach to institutionalization of dissemination services supported through DCBP funds was to pool funds from multiple sources with program responsibility for dissemination and the money to support dissemination requirements. Although $11,000 was identified from various programs prior to the close of the grant (October, 1981) and additional potential dissemination resources were being examined, the proposal to continue one full-time and one-part time DCBP staff member was met with lukewarm reaction by the Personnel Review Committee and was ultimately rejected by the Commissioner. In light of projections of severe federal budget cuts and a trimming of the state budget for education agency programs and staff, the pooling of funds was seen as a bandaid rather than a real solution to the problem of continuing DCBP - supported services.

An analysis by the DCBP project director of the institutionalization effort was completed; Vaughan's failure and success characteristics were used for the analysis. Results of examining the failure characteristics pointed primarily to the problem of unstable "local" (state education agency) finances; this unstable condition emerged from severe anticipated cuts to education from both federal and state sources.

Success characteristics noted by Vaughan which may have hampered the institutionalization effort in Rhode Island were: not establishing incremental funding commitments from the client groups being served; lack of external (school district) visibility, along with internal visibility being greatest at non-decisionmaking levels within the state education agency; and insufficient usage of multiple communication channels within the state agency. In addition, perhaps alternative support strategies to the pooling of funds approach should have been pursued earlier and with greater vigor.

The proposed approach to institutionalization was established in the earliest stages of DCBP operations. It was based on the premise that if there were a demand for dissemination services of the nature provided by the grant and the demand was met through timely and high-quality services, program funds would be earmarked at the end of federal funding of the DCBP to continue the services. This approach, under better financial conditions, might well have succeeded. The identification of $11,000 to continue DCBP services in a small state agency at a time of financial crisis bears testimony to that statement. The economic environment, in the case of Rhode Island, appeared to be an important factor. This situation, accompanied

by lack of strong support among some of the higher level decisionmakers, may have hampered the full institutionalization of DCBP services in Rhode Island.

Attachment A

DOCUMENTS PREPARED TO AID INSTITUTIONALIZATION EFFORT

1. Overview of Dissemination Services

2. Points to Consider in Identifying Dissemination Services

3. Basic Steps and Responsibilities For Dissemination Services

4. Budget Approval Form

OVERVIEW OF DISSEMINATION SERVICES

TYPE OF PRODUCT	DISSEMINATION SERVICES
Brochures Flyers Booklets Manuals or Guides (e.g., Program Guidelines Manuals, Curriculum Guides)	• Writing of narrative (based on background information provided by program managers) • Editing of narrative (if already prepared by program manager) • Proofreading • Design of graphics, special lettering, formatting, layout, typing, etc., to provide a camera-ready copy for printing
Executive Summary Highlights Report Brochure on Key Report/Study Findings	• Writing of document (based on information provided in technical or comprehensive report) • Preparation of cover, graphics within document (artwork or photography) or divider pages -- to separate sections • Formatting and layout of document; typing
Technical Reports Regulations	• Editing • Proofreading • Preparation of cover, graphics, within document (photography or artwork), or divider pages -- to separate sections or chapters • Formatting and layout of document; typing
Directories Master Calendar of Events Updating of Annual or Periodic Documents (e.g., names of people, organizations, training/workshop information on course offerings, locations, etc.)	• Gathering of information from selected sources (people or agencies) • Writing of document • Design, layout, graphics and typing of document • Proofreading

Newsletters	• Writing of articles (based on information provided by program manager) • Critique and/or editing of article(s) prepared by others • Graphics, design, layout and typing to yield a camera-ready copy
Transparencies Slide-Tapes Charts Posters	• Writing of copy (based on ideas/content from the program manager) • Editing of information for transparencies or script for slide-tape (if already prepared by the program manager) • Hand-lettered transparencies to ensure legibility by all viewers • Photography and artwork for slides; audio to accompany slide presentation
Placards/Signs Invitations Stationery Logo Design Certificates Resolutions Forms	• Graphic design • Calligraphy • Development of forms: formatting, lettering, typing, preparation of copy for printing
Conference-related: Planning and Coordinating Logistics	• Scheduling of site, including appropriate space, number of rooms and suitable geographic location • Arrangements for coffee, food as needed • Follow-through and confirmation with project site on all arrangements

(Conference-related Con't)

Invitational Materials (letter, flyer or brochure, schedule of events, response form, etc.)	• Writing of all materials needed, with approval by program manager • Design of graphics, special lettering, layout, etc.
Conference Support Materials (placards, signs, etc.)	• Design and preparation (hand-lettering) of support materials
Materials for Presentations (e.g., transparencies, charts, posters, slide-tapes)	• See specific sections for description
Conference Evaluation Forms	• Development of conference evaluation form • Preparation (typing, lettering) of copy for printing

POINTS TO CONSIDER IN IDENTIFYING

DISSEMINATION SERVICES

1. What essential dissemination services are needed that you can't provide yourself or which you are now doing as an "extra"?

2. What dissemination services would be most helpful/beneficial in achieving the goals of the program?

3. What dissemination services have you used in the past that you wish to continue?

4. Are program (not administrative) funds available to support the desired service? Are matching state funds required?

   Related to costs, Support Services staff can assist you in assigning cost estimates to various projects; or, if you have "x" amount of dollars to allocate for dissemination activities, Support Services staff can meet with you to design a dissemination plan in keeping with your budget, and one that meets with your approval and your program needs.

A final note: The program manager makes the decisions about what will or will not be done within a given project. Support Services staff are responsible for providing suggestions and recommendations regarding technical facets of dissemination.

BASIC STEPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR DISSEMINATION SERVICES

WHAT	WHO	
	Program Manager	Support Services Staff
1. *PLAN THE PROJECT:*	X	X
• What product is needed?		
• Who is the target audience(s)?		
• Content/information that will serve as basis for product development?		
• Preferences for style, format, etc.?		
• Date needed?		
2. *DRAFT THE PRODUCT:*		
• Develop narrative, graphics, etc.		X
• Obtain feedback from program manager at appropriate stages or check points (usually a meeting; sometimes both verbal and written comments).	X	X
• Make modifications based on program manager's direction.		X
3. *PREPARE FINAL PRODUCT:*		
• Complete final copy (camera-ready if product is to be printed); includes typing.		X
• Proof final product.	X	X

Program Title: _____ Account #: _____

Program Manager: _____

DESCRIPTION OF DISSEMINATION SERVICE	DATE DUE (mo./yr.)	COST INFORMATION		
		TYPE OF EXPENSE	ESTIMATED COST	OBJECT CODE
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		

Program Title: _____ Account #: _____

Program Manager: _____

DESCRIPTION OF DISSEMINATION SERVICE	DATE DUE (mo./yr.)	COST INFORMATION		
		TYPE OF EXPENSE	ESTIMATED COST	OBJECT CODE
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		

79

81

82

81

Program Title: _____ Account #: _____

Program Manager: _____

DESCRIPTION OF DISSEMINATION SERVICE	DATE DUE (mo./yr.)	COST INFORMATION		
		TYPE OF EXPENSE	ESTIMATED COST	OBJECT CODE
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		
		Personnel		
		Materials		
		In-state Travel		
		Other		
		TOTAL COST		